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ABSTRACT

Using data produced by a 1987 national survey of approximately 2,400 rural school board presidents, district superintendents, principals, and teachers, this report focuses on special concerns and strengths revealed by 351 respondents from rural, small schools in 7 Northeastern states (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont). The report is divided into two sections: a brief summary of national survey results and a summary of results from the Northeastern states which emphasizes rural strengths, state-by-state differences, rural concerns, and differences among respondent groups. Nationwide results revealed concurrence by all respondent groups on only three issues: improving academic performance of students from low-income families; improving students' thinking/reasoning skills; and better recognizing/rewarding outstanding teachers. The survey identified 10 additional issues of high concern to at least 33% of Northeast respondents: community/parent involvement; use of evaluation/research to plan; development of students' self-esteem; expectations for students' academic development; understanding instructional goals; quality inservice programs; alternative delivery systems for instruction; community support; fine/performing arts; academic performance of secondary students. Over 50% of Northeast respondents suggested that of the 40 issues included in the survey, little or no improvement was needed in: availability of quality instructional materials; size/stability of teaching/administrative staff; and students' attendance patterns. (NEC)

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Rural Education in the Northeast United States

Janet Angelis
Nancy King

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Janet Angelis
Nancy King

1987

The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 290 South Main Street, Andover, MA 01810
(617) 470-0098

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INTRODUCTION

In 1986, the U.S. Congress directed the nine regional educational laboratories* to " . . . identify and support further development of promising, rural small-school activities and practices within their regions." The House and Senate appropriation committees provided the laboratories with $4 million to fund the initiative.

The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands and its sister laboratories enthusiastically accepted the congressional charge. We recognized that rural, small schools had all too often been left behind in the effort to upgrade the quality of public education. We believed that this initiative would enable us to begin projects that would, over time, help rural, small schools better educate their students.

Before beginning, the laboratories wanted to become better acquainted with the specific challenges facing rural, small schools in our own regions, state-by-state. Realizing that four million dollars would not be enough to solve all of the problems of rural education, it became important to identify rural America's chief educational concerns as well as those that could be set aside until resources to address them become available.

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*Regional educational laboratories are funded by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement to bring the best educational research and practice to schools in designated regions of the country.

Together, we commissioned a survey of targeted rural school districts. A national random sample of 9,300 members of four target groups (school board presidents, district superintendents, building principals, and classroom teachers) was surveyed. The survey asked respondents to consider 40 issues facing rural, small schools and to indicate whether each issue was in 1) great need; 2) fairly strong need; 3) moderate need; 4) little need; or 5) no need of improvement. When results were scored, the "moderate need" category was eliminated and the top two and bottom two categories were collapsed together, producing issues of "high" and "low" concern. (A copy of the questionnaire can be found in the Appendix of this report.)

Roughly 26 percent of those who received the survey responded. Of that 26 percent, 15 percent were from the Northeast. Jane Arends of the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, assisted by Jerry Kirkpatrick of the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, compiled the returns and produced a national report entitled, *Building on Excellence: Regional Priorities for the Improvement of Rural, Small Schools*. The report was first published by the Council for Educational Development and Research (CEDaR) in April, 1987.

This report, *Rural Education in the Northeast United States*, developed by The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, incorporates and expands on their analysis. Using data produced by the national survey, it focuses on the special concerns and strengths of

rural, small schools in the seven Northeastern states: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont.*

This report is divided into two sections: a brief summary of the results of the national survey and a summary of the results from the Northeastern states, focusing on rural strengths, state-by-state differences, rural concerns, and differences among respondent groups.

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*Because most data bases from which mail houses draw names for a random survey do not contain entries for U.S. territories such as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, the original survey conducted by the regional laboratories did not gather data from those jurisdictions. Since this report is based on results of that national survey, we regret that it, too, lacks data from the islands. The Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico are an integral part of The Regional Laboratory's service area. We have done our own data gathering in the islands and, although the data are not in the same form as the rest of the national data and are thus not included in this report, the needs of rural education in the islands are reflected in our plans to serve rural schools throughout our region. A brief description of those plans can be found in the conclusion of this report.

NATIONAL RESULTS: A SUMMARY

Results of the nationwide survey show that members of all four respondent groups -- school board presidents, district superintendents, building principals, and classroom teachers -- strongly agree on the importance of three of the 40 issues:

- improving academic performance of students from low-income families;
- improving students' thinking and reasoning skills; and
- better recognizing and rewarding outstanding teachers.

The concurrence on these three issues remains constant among the four groups, across all nine regions of the country, and within all 50 states.

Beyond these three issues, there is little national consensus about what needs to be improved in rural, small schools. However, the survey identifies 15 issues that at least one-third of the total respondents feel are of high concern. A list of these items can be found in the Appendix of this report.

More consensus exists about which problems are least in need of improvement. These can be seen as rural, small school strengths. Some of these strengths are: a) availability of quality instructional materials; b) school/classroom atmosphere or climate; c) size and/or turnover of teachers and administrators; d) student attendance and behavior; e) use of school time for instruction and student learning; and f) availability of

adequate facilities. On these seven items, nearly half of all respondents say little or no improvement is needed. A list of these items can be found in the Appendix.

In general, respondents closest to the classroom exhibit the greatest concern for the quality of rural, small schools. Teachers and principals tend to express the same concerns. District superintendents have fewer concerns; school board presidents have fewer yet.

On more than half of the items surveyed, educators in Southeastern states believe they have a need to make serious improvements in their rural, small schools. In contrast, on only 3 of the 40 questions did more than half of respondents from the Northeast consider their problems substantial. (A region by region comparison can be found in the Appendix.)

NORTHEASTERN REGIONAL RESULTS

In all, 351 educators from the Northeastern states responded to the survey. Of these, 19 percent were school board presidents and 27 percent each were superintendents, principals, and teachers.

Rural Strengths

Educators and school administrators in the Northeast identify several areas that are not in need of improvement. Over 50 percent of survey respondents from the Northeast suggest that of the 40 issues included in the survey, little or no improvement is needed in:

- availability of quality instructional materials;
- size and/or stability of teaching and administrative staff; and
- students' attendance patterns.

Other items or issues that respondents indicate need little immediate attention include: school/classroom atmosphere or climate (48%); availability of adequate teaching/learning facilities (43%); students' behavior in school (41%); and a system to recognize/reward outstanding student achievement (41%). In all, the survey identifies 15 items on which more than one-third of Northeastern respondents claim little or no improvement is needed. Table 1 lists the 15 items and compares the response in the Northeast and nationwide.

Table 1
ITEMS IDENTIFIED AS LOW CONCERNS

Issue	Percentage of All Respondents Identifying Item as a Low Concern	
	Northeast	Nationwide
1. Availability of Quality Instructional Materials	60	54
2. Size/Turnover of Staff	57	58
3. Students' Attendance Patterns	51	46
4. School/Classroom Atmosphere	48	50
5. Adequate Facilities	43	43
6. Students' Behavior	41	42
7. Recognizing Student Achievement	41	42
8. Variety in Offered Courses	40	36
9. Health and Physical Education	39	40
10. Use of Time for Instruction	39	47
11. Support for Effective Teaching	37	33
12. Availability of Teachers for Selected Subjects	36	37
13. Student Support Services	35	33
14. Systems to Access Student Learning	35	32
15. Classroom Instruction Methods	34	36

State-by State Analysis of Low Concern

On the 15 issues of low concern for respondents in the Northeastern region, those who replied from Massachusetts show the lowest level of concern. An average of 61 percent of respondents from that state registered low concern

on the items identified as the lowest concern for the region. New Hampshire (at 58 percent) registers the second lowest concern on these same fifteen items. All other states register under 50 percent, indicating greater concern. (See Table 2.)

Table 2
STATE-BY-STATE ANALYSIS OF ITEMS OF LOWEST CONCERN BY PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS

ITEM	NE	ME	NH	VT	CT	MA	RI	NY
1. Availability of Quality Instructional Materials	60	49	50	39	76	78	60	63
2. Size/Turnover of Staff	57	62	60	45	65	62	80	53
3. Students' Attendance Patterns	51	53	70	51	48	68	70	43
4. School/Classroom Atmosphere	48	43	60	42	45	78	60	42
5. Adequate Facilities	43	32	40	42	38	57	30	47
6. Students' Behavior	41	45	55	27	45	57	40	35
7. Recognizing Student Achievement	41	34	60	24	48	78	40	34
8. Variety in Offered Courses	40	32	60	30	48	73	60	32
9. Health and Physical Education	39	31	55	36	28	46	40	40
10. Use of Time for Instruction	39	30	80	24	55	51	30	34
11. Support for Effective Teaching	37	30	60	24	38	57	60	32
12. Availability of Teachers for Selected Subjects	36	34	60	24	52	60	50	26
13. Student Support Services	35	16	35	33	52	54	60	35
14. Systems to Access Student Learning	35	34	60	18	38	43	30	35
15. Classroom Instruction Methods	34	30	65	36	24	49	30	30
AVERAGE	42	37	58	33	47	61	49	39

The state with the greatest concern overall for the items that, on average, are considered to be of low concern in most Northeastern states is Vermont; only 33 percent of Vermont respondents consider these 15 items to be of low concern. Maine and New York follow with percentages of 37 and 39 percent, respectively.

There is significant variance among states on several low concern items. The greatest variability (with a 56 percentage point difference between the states registering the highest and lowest concern) can be found on item 10, use of school time for instruction and student learning. New Hampshire seems least concerned about this issue (80 percent voting it a low concern item), but only 24 percent of Vermont respondents believe this is an issue of low concern. A 54 percentage point difference can be found between Massachusetts (78 percent) and Vermont (24 percent) on concern for a system to reward outstanding student achievement. Again, Vermont is much more concerned about this issue than Massachusetts.

In the 15 low concern items regionally, least variance (20 percentage points) among Northeastern states is found on item 5, availability of adequate teaching/learning facilities. On average, 43 percent of respondents regionally register this as of low concern. Again, Massachusetts indicates the least concern at 57 percent; Rhode Island, at 30 percent, and Maine, at 32 percent, are most concerned about adequate facilities.

On the availability of quality instructional materials -- the issue of lowest concern regionally (at 60 percent) -- respondents from Massachusetts show least concern (78 percent), and respondents from Vermont, the most (39 percent).

The issue of second lowest concern regionally is the size and turnover of teaching and administrative staff. This is of least concern in Rhode Island (80 percent) and of greatest concern in Vermont (45 percent).

On the issue of third lowest concern, students' attendance patterns, New Hampshire and Rhode Island (both at 70 percent) are least concerned and New York (at 43 percent) shows most concern.

Rural Concerns

Like educators nationwide, educators from rural sections of the Northeast strongly agree on the three issues of greatest concern. Over 50 percent of respondents from the rural Northeast say:

- There is a great need to improve the academic performance of their students from low-income families.
- Students' thinking and reasoning skills need to be improved.
- A better system is needed to recognize and reward outstanding teachers.

Although the survey includes items relating to eight specific academic areas, on only one -- fine and performing arts -- did more than one-third

of the respondents from the Northeast express high concern. The academic areas in which respondents showed less concern about student performance include:

- reading comprehension
- language arts
- mathematics
- foreign languages
- science
- social sciences
- health and physical education

In general, Northeastern respondents are twice as concerned about the academic achievement of rural high school students than students in the elementary grades.

Other items on which more than one-third of respondents voiced high concern include development of students' self-esteem and aspirations, availability of community support for education, and availability of quality inservice programs for staff.

In all, the survey identifies 13 issues that are of high concern to at least one-third of the total respondents in the Northeast. Table 3 lists the 13 items and compares the results from the Northeast with those nationwide.

Table 3
ITEMS IDENTIFIED AS HIGH CONCERNS

Issue	Percentage of All Respondents Identifying Item as a High Concern	
	Northeast	Nationwide
1. Academic Performance of Low-Income Students	67	62
2. Students' Thinking/Reasoning Skills	58	61
3. Rewarding Outstanding Teachers	56	47
4. Community/Parent Involvement	41	37
5. Use of Evaluation/Research to Plan	40	31
6. Development of Students' Self-Esteem	40	43
7. Expectations for Students' Academic Development	38	36
8. Understanding Instructional Goals	36	28
9. Quality Inservice Programs	36	35
10. Alternative Delivery Systems for Instruction	36	31
11. Community Support	34	36
12. Fine/Performing Arts	34	35
13. Academic Performance of Secondary Students	33	38

State-by State Analysis of High Concern Issues

On the 13 issues of greatest concern for educators and school board presidents in the seven Northeast states, the highest level of concern overall (50 percent) is registered in Vermont. Maine and New York follow with overall high concern ratings of 46 percent each on the same 13 items.

Massachusetts registers the lowest concern (23 percent) among the seven Northeastern states on the top 13 high concern items, followed closely by New Hampshire with 25 percent. Table 4 shows a state-by-state comparison for the 13 issues of greatest concern.

Table 4
STATE-BY-STATE ANALYSIS OF ITEMS OF HIGHEST CONCERN BY PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS

ITEM	NE	ME	NH	VT	CT	MA	RI	NY
1. Academic Performance of Low-Income Students	61	61	45	70	59	46	40	66
2. Students' Thinking/Reasoning Skills	57	66	35	64	48	27	40	65
3. Rewarding Outstanding Teachers	56	57	40	58	52	32	60	65
4. Community/Parent Involvement	41	46	10	51	41	16	50	47
5. Use of Evaluation/Research to Plan	40	39	25	48	31	24	50	45
6. Development of Students' Self-Esteem	40	49	10	51	31	13	10	47
7. Expectations for Students' Academic Development	38	45	25	51	34	27	30	38
8. Understanding Instructional Goals	36	28	10	51	34	19	50	44
9. Quality Inservice Programs	36	39	20	45	31	24	50	38
10. Alternative Delivery Systems for Instruction	36	47	25	36	28	16	40	38
11. Community Support	34	54	20	42	34	24	30	26
12. Fine/Performing Arts	34	31	20	45	31	19	40	39
13. Academic Performance of Secondary Students	33	38	35	37	24	16	30	36
AVERAGE	42	46	25	50	37	23	40	46

Considerable variance among states can be found on several high concern items. On three items -- extent of community and parent involvement (No. 4), development of students' self-esteem and aspirations (No. 6), and widespread understanding of instructional goals (No. 8) -- there is a 41 percentage point difference between the states registering the highest concern and the states registering the lowest.

The least variance is found on the issue of overall academic performance of students in secondary grades (No. 13). Here, there is only a 23 percentage point difference between the state registering the highest concern (Vermont at 39 percent) and the state registering the lowest concern (Massachusetts at 16 percent).

There is not always a high level of agreement on an issue within a state. For example, on the issue of availability of community support for quality education, 40 percent of respondents from Rhode Island indicate a high concern, and an equal number from that state show a low level of concern. The high level of concern comes from principals (60% of those responding), the low level, from superintendents (67% of respondents).

On the issue of highest concern in the seven Northeastern states -- overall academic performance of students from low-income families -- Vermont indicates the greatest concern at 70 percent, and Rhode Island, at 40 percent, is least concerned. However, half of Rhode Island respondents -- more than twice that of any other state -- express concern about the

overall academic performance of students with limited English proficiency.

On the topic of second highest concern in the Northeast -- students' thinking and reasoning skills -- Maine and New York show the greatest concern (66 and 65 percent, respectively) and Massachusetts, at 27 percent, shows the least.

On the third issue on which more than half of the Northeastern respondents indicate a high level of concern -- a system to recognize and reward outstanding teachers -- New York expresses the greatest concern (65 percent) and Massachusetts, at 32 percent, expresses the least.

Analysis of Response by Role Group

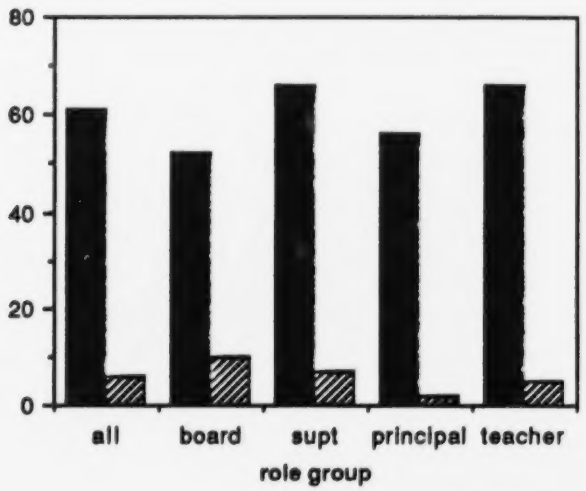
As a group, school board presidents consistently express the least concern about all of the issues identified as of high concern in the Northeast.

Teachers express the least concern on more than half of the 13 issues of greatest concern to Northeastern educators.

With the exception of student behavior, school board presidents are less likely than superintendents, principals, or teachers to find fault with their educational system. Most school board presidents, for example, see little need to improve the adequacy of teaching or learning facilities; those who work in those facilities -- principals and teachers -- are less likely to share this view.

On two of the top three concerns of educators in the Northeast, superintendents and teachers voice the greatest alarm -- 66 percent claim that the academic performance of children from low income families is either in "great need" or "fairly strong need" of improvement. Fifty-six percent of principals and 52 percent of school board principals agree. Figure 1 compares responses from all role groups regarding the need for improvement in academic performance of children from low-income families.

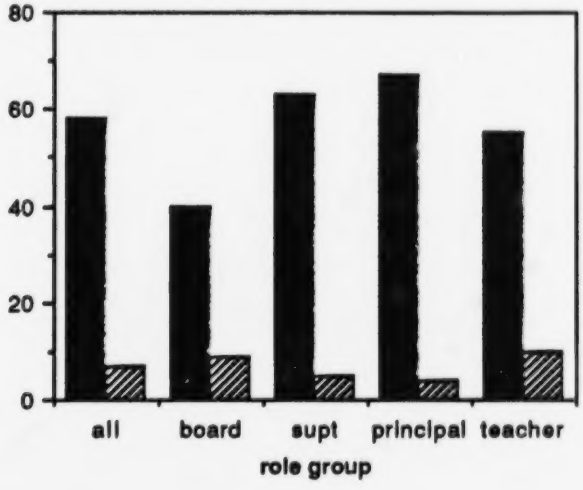
Figure 1
CONCERN ABOUT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS FROM LOW-INCOME FAMILIES



Percent of respondents registering need for great improvement (■) or little improvement (▨) in the overall academic performance of students from low-income families.

On improving the thinking and reasoning skills of rural students, 67 percent of principals, 63 percent of superintendents, 55 percent of teachers, and 40 percent of school board presidents rank this item as of high concern (See Figure 2).

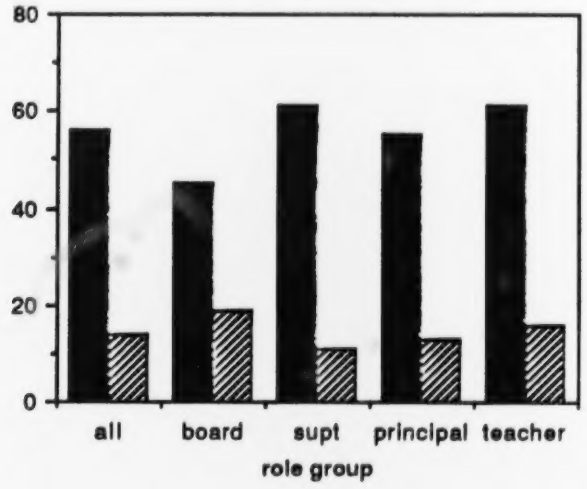
Figure 2
CONCERN ABOUT STUDENTS' THINKING/REASONING SKILLS



Percent of respondents registering need for great improvement (■) or little improvement (▨) in students' thinking/reasoning skills.

Sixty-one percent of superintendents and teachers rank the need for a system that recognizes and rewards outstanding teachers as in strong need of improvement. Forty-five percent and 55 percent, respectively, of school board presidents and principals also rank this item as a top concern (see Figure 3).

Figure 3
CONCERN ABOUT RECOGNIZING/REWARDING OUTSTANDING TEACHERS



Percent of respondents registering need for great improvement (■) or little improvement (▨) in the system to recognize/reward outstanding teachers.

CONCLUSION

While it is clear that rural educators in the Northeast have identified several legitimate problems, results of the survey indicate that for the most part they feel they have a strong educational system. However, given the high percentage of respondents who expressed a strong need to improve the academic performance of their low-income students as well their students' thinking and reasoning skills, The Regional Laboratory's Rural Initiative is focusing on those needs.

The Rural Initiative, begun in the 1987-1988 academic year, joins The Laboratory with teams of service providers and teachers and others in ten schools that have low enrollment (less than 1000) and are located in communities with below average income (as indicated on the 1980 census). These schools will select for adoption validated practices that improve students' basic thinking skills, and teachers will receive quality training that will provide them with the knowledge and support they need to implement these new programs in the classroom. In the second year, The Laboratory will disseminate these programs and our findings to other schools in the region.

While designed to increase academic performance of low-income students and improve students' thinking skills, this project will also provide quality inservice instruction for teachers in rural schools and increase expectations for student performance, both items of concern to roughly one-

third of those who responded to the survey (see Table 3). At some sites, the project also involves the community in selecting programs appropriate to that school or district, seeks to improve the academic performance of secondary students, or involves alternative delivery systems for instruction.

In a related initiative, The Laboratory is sponsoring a program to recognize and reward outstanding teachers in small, rural schools, increase the use of research knowledge among teachers and those who work with them, and promote communication between rural educators.

One of the most important responsibilities of The Regional Laboratory is linking educational research to practice -- helping school people, policymakers, and researchers learn from one another. Survey results indicate that many rural educators in the Northeast are eager to obtain and use research results in planning. Forty percent of respondents from the Northeast (9 percentage points higher than the national average) express a strong need for improvement in the use of evaluation and research information for planning (see Table 3). The Regional Laboratory's Rural Initiative strives to meet this need and challenge.

GENERAL PURPOSE DATA SHEET II
form no. 70921

NAME IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: 4501

SPECIAL CODES A B C D E F G H I J

Survey of Opportunities for Educational Improvement in Small, Rural Schools

USE NO. 2 PENCIL ONLY

	There is no need for improvement. A	There is little need for improvement. B	There is moderate need for improvement. C	There is fairly strong need for improvement. D	There is great need for improvement. E
1. Overall academic performance of students in elementary grades.	A	B	C	D	E
2. Overall academic performance of students in secondary grades.	A	B	C	D	E
3. Overall academic performance of students from low-income families.	A	B	C	D	E
4. Overall academic performance of students with limited English proficiency.	A	B	C	D	E
5. Student academic performance in reading comprehension.	A	B	C	D	E
6. Student academic performance in language arts.	A	B	C	D	E
7. Student academic performance in mathematics.	A	B	C	D	E
8. Student academic performance in foreign languages.	A	B	C	D	E
9. Student academic performance in science.	A	B	C	D	E
10. Student academic performance in social studies.	A	B	C	D	E
11. Student performance in fine/performing arts.	A	B	C	D	E
12. Student performance in health and physical education.	A	B	C	D	E
13. Students' thinking/reasoning skills.	A	B	C	D	E
14. Students' behavior in school.	A	B	C	D	E
15. Vocational or career preparation received by students.	A	B	C	D	E
16. Development of students' self-esteem and aspirations.	A	B	C	D	E
17. Students' attendance patterns.	A	B	C	D	E
18. Availability of teachers for selected subjects.	A	B	C	D	E
19. Availability of student support services (e.g., counseling, guidance, health).	A	B	C	D	E
20. Availability of quality instructional materials (textbooks, supplies).	A	B	C	D	E
21. Availability of adequate teaching/learning facilities.	A	B	C	D	E
22. Availability of community support for quality education.	A	B	C	D	E
23. Availability of variety in courses offered.	A	B	C	D	E
24. Availability of support and resources for effective teaching.	A	B	C	D	E
25. Availability of alternative delivery systems for instruction.	A	B	C	D	E
26. Alignment of instructional goals, materials, and assessment.	A	B	C	D	E
27. Coordination of instructional programs with student services.	A	B	C	D	E
28. Coordination between school programs and external agencies.	A	B	C	D	E
29. Extent of community and parent involvement.	A	B	C	D	E
30. Level of expectation for student academic development.	A	B	C	D	E
31. Quality of instructional methods used in classrooms.	A	B	C	D	E
32. Quality of systems for assessing student learning outcomes.	A	B	C	D	E
33. Quality of inservice programs available for school staff.	A	B	C	D	E
34. School/classroom atmosphere or climate.	A	B	C	D	E
35. System to recognize/reward outstanding student achievement.	A	B	C	D	E
36. System to recognize/reward outstanding teachers.	A	B	C	D	E
37. Size and/or turnover of the teaching and administrative staff.	A	B	C	D	E
38. Use of school time for instruction and student learning.	A	B	C	D	E
39. Use of evaluation and research information for planning.	A	B	C	D	E
40. Widespread understanding of instructional goals.	A	B	C	D	E

ITEMS IDENTIFIED AS HIGH CONCERNS

Issue	Percentage of All Respondents Identifying It As a High Concern
Academic Performance of Students From Low-Income Families	62
Students' Thinking and Reasoning Skills	61
System to Reward or Recognize Outstanding Teachers	47
Development of Students' Self-Esteem and Aspirations	43
Academic Performance in Science	39
Academic Performance of Secondary Students	38
Academic Performance in Reading Comprehension	38
Extent of Community and Parent Involvement	37
Academic Performance in Mathematics	37
Availability of Community Support for Quality Education	36
Level of Expectation for Student Academic Performance	36
Quality of Inservice Programs for Staff	35
Academic Performance in Foreign Languages	35
Student Performance in Fine/Performing Arts	35
Academic Performance in Language Arts	35

ISSUES THAT REQUIRE LITTLE OR NO IMPROVEMENT

Issue	Percentage of Respondents Identifying It As a Low Concern
Size and/or Turnover of the Teaching and Administrative Staff	58
Availability of Quality Instructional Materials	54
School/Classroom Atmosphere or Climate	50
Use of School Time for Instruction and Student Learning	47
Students' Attendance	46
Availability of Adequate Teaching/ Learning Facilities	43
Students' Behavior	42

	Appal.	West	Central	Mid-west	North-east	North-west	Mid-Atlantic	South-west	South-east	Average
Performance of elementary students	35	28	9	14	15	15	18	26	39	22.12
Performance of secondary students	51	41	22	29	33	29	33	43	57	37.67
Performance of low-income students	75	64	46	54	61	50	65	63	80	61.99
Performance of low English proficiency students	28	51	24	26	22	31	29	45	46	33.53
Performance of reading comprehension	54	42	27	28	31	26	33	45	58	38.2
Performance in language arts	46	41	23	29	32	30	26	38	49	34.81
Performance in mathematics	45	43	24	27	26	29	35	43	58	36.64
Performance in foreign languages	45	37	38	33	25	33	21	40	46	35.28
Performance in science	53	45	27	34	32	32	31	40	56	38.87
Performance in social studies	42	25	19	22	25	23	23	34	44	28.46
Performance in fine/performing arts	49	39	25	31	34	34	26	35	46	35.22
Performance in health and physical education	29	24	14	18	22	19	19	18	31	21.49
Students' thinking/reasoning skills	73	65	49	54	58	47	63	64	78	60.96
Students' behavior in schools	32	23	14	18	19	16	16	23	34	21.42
Vocational/career prep received by students	41	45	30	30	32	34	31	28	45	35.07
Development-students' self-esteem/aspirations	50	44	35	38	40	36	49	40	54	42.68
Students' attendance patterns	32	23	12	14	13	14	11	21	30	18.81
Availability of teachers for selected subjects	33	29	22	20	30	23	22	26	32	26.23
Availability of student support service	46	44	27	30	32	31	39	30	41	35.5
Availablity of quality instructional materials	24	19	9	11	11	14	12	15	29	15.96
Availability of teaching/learning facilities	36	30	16	21	30	21	19	18	40	25.6
Community support for quality education	51	34	26	31	34	31	40	31	45	35.87
Availability of variety in courses offered	33	27	19	24	24	26	22	25	29	25.48
Support and resources for effective teaching	33	31	20	22	28	24	24	24	30	26.22
Alternative delivery systems for instruction	35	42	25	26	36	28	26	26	36	31.06
Alignment of instruct. materials and assessment	22	28	18	22	29	18	15	17	25	21.49
Coord. of instruct. programs w/student services	17	21	13	14	19	15	19	14	25	17.26
Coord. between school programs & external agencies	25	26	21	21	31	20	26	20	33	34.86
Extent of community and parent involvement	45	36	29	31	41	25	42	34	48	36.63
Expectation for student academic development	43	44	26	30	38	28	39	36	44	36.22
Quality of instructional methods used in classroom	22	18	15	17	17	12	17	18	24	17.73
Quality of systems for assessing student learning	28	33	22	26	25	23	23	20	28	25.22
Quality of inservice programs for school staff	36	33	37	36	36	36	41	28	29	34.53
School/classroom atmosphere	14	14	9	12	12	9	8	13	20	12.22
System to reward outstanding students	25	26	24	21	23	19	20	25	33	23.91
System to reward outstanding teachers	50	36	47	46	56	46	44	45	51	46.81
Size/turnover of teaching/administrative staff	15	17	10	11	15	14	15	14	16	14.16
Use of time for instruction/student learning	19	22	15	18	25	18	19	16	21	19.03
Use of evaluation/research info for planning	34	34	28	28	40	26	31	25	32	30.86
Widespread understanding of instructional goals	25	32	28	29	36	23	24	25	29	27.94

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS BY REGION EXPRESSING HIGH CONCERN FOR ITEMS

	Appal.	West	Central	Mid-west	North-east	North-west	Mid-Atlantic	South-west	South-east	Average
Performance of elementary students	13	16	40	33	24	37	25	22	14	24.99
Performance of secondary students	9	7	25	19	14	19	14	11	5	13.61
Performance of low-income students	3	6	15	10	6	14	10	7	3	7.99
Performance of low English proficiency students	18	11	28	29	21	19	22	17	17	20.67
Performance of reading comprehension	7	19	27	23	24	32	19	12	6	18.98
Performance in language arts	12	17	26	23	19	26	21	13	8	18.24
Performance in mathematics	11	18	30	26	27	29	23	15	8	20.79
Performance in foreign languages	15	13	23	29	28	19	29	20	13	20.67
Performance in science	10	15	26	22	24	24	18	15	7	17.9
Performance in social studies	11	20	32	27	23	33	26	17	9	22.11
Performance in fine/performing arts	19	21	33	32	27	28	35	29	15	26.33
Performance in health and physical education	30	38	49	43	39	48	40	44	28	39.9
Students' thinking/reasoning skills	4	8	13	10	7	19	10	7	3	8.87
Students' behavior in schools	32	45	53	48	41	54	42	39	26	42.1
Vocational/career prep received by students	18	16	29	29	21	22	24	27	17	22.48
Development-students' self-esteem/aspirations	11	20	24	21	19	31	23	21	13	20.24
Students' attendance patterns	28	42	55	52	51	59	53	45	31	46.12
Availability of teachers for selected subjects	29	34	47	43	36	40	36	38	28	36.57
Availability of student support service	21	25	43	36	35	38	36	38	26	33.08
Availability of quality instructional materials	41	48	65	59	60	64	60	58	34	54.27
Availability of teaching/learning facilities	32	36	55	49	43	55	43	50	28	43.31
Community support for quality education	19	34	42	35	30	41	32	37	21	32.26
Availability of variety in courses offered	30	28	37	39	40	40	46	37	29	36.11
Support and resources for effective teaching	22	30	39	35	37	39	37	36	25	33.09
Alternative delivery systems for instruction	21	23	33	30	25	32	29	32	18	26.72
Alignment of instruct. materials and assessment	28	23	40	35	27	41	43	42	29	34.2
Coord. of instruct. programs w/student services	28	32	45	42	31	42	36	44	27	36.42
Coord. between school programs & external agencies	28	31	38	37	26	38	28	39	25	32.3
Extent of community and parent involvement	19	31	34	32	18	40	24	31	16	27.26
Expectation for student academic development	18	29	36	29	26	38	25	25	18	26.93
Quality of instructional methods used in classroom	29	31	41	38	34	49	33	38	29	35.7
Quality of systems for assessing student learning	30	27	35	30	35	37	29	35	29	31.82
Quality of inservice programs for school staff	31	30	30	29	32	34	22	33	35	30.79
School/classroom atmosphere	41	53	59	56	48	58	45	55	37	50.12
System to reward outstanding students	32	47	43	43	41	50	48	40	34	41.77
System to reward outstanding teachers	20	24	19	18	14	25	22	20	19	20.12
Size/turnover of teaching/administrative staff	55	48	67	62	57	60	60	60	49	57.58
Use of time for instruction/student learning	50	49	50	48	39	47	43	53	43	46.78
Use of evaluation/research info for planning	25	19	28	24	19	33	32	32	27	23.5
Widespread understanding of instructional goals	29	24	33	25	25	37	42	34	32	31.24

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS BY REGION EXPRESSING LOW CONCERN FOR ITEMS

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